

(56)

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28 March 1973

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Qadhafi's Strengths and Vulnerabilities

1. Libya's President Qadhafi conducts his unremitting anti-Israeli, anti-US struggle from a well fortified position. As head of an oil-rich, underpopulated country, he has many resources for troublemaking and practically no economic vulnerability. A revolutionary who led the overthrow of the monarchy, he has not yet suffered setbacks of enough moment to destroy his initial support. As uncompromising spokesman for the Palestinian cause, he can call on Arab emotions more effectively than other leaders who recognize that all-out confrontation will not make Israel disappear.

2. Libyan oil is a critical factor in maintaining the military and economic position of our NATO allies. Exports to Western Europe (about 85 percent of total exports) account for 13 percent of Western Europe's total supply; the high quality and short haul of Libyan crude make it more important than this percentage would indicate. Qadhafi's oil revenues run over \$1.5 billion annually, 95 percent from US companies. Central Bank reserves are about \$3 billion.

3. Qadhafi's position at home is fairly secure. He is a strong personality, an effective speaker, and well educated by the standards of the Libyan officer corps. He is an emotional and volatile man but not [redacted] [redacted] irrational one, as indeed he is not when viewed in terms of his objectives. His advocacy of the proposed union with Egypt is unpopular, however, and some key military officers might withdraw their support if this project seemed to be in trouble. If necessary to protect his regime, Qadhafi might fall back on well over 1,000 Egyptian troops stationed in Libya.

4. Qadhafi is an Islamic fundamentalist, deeply hostile toward Israel and its supporters (and to Soviet Communism as well). He is also convinced that it is the major mission of any Arab leader to unite the Arab peoples. This makes him scornful of Arab leaders who do not share his priorities,

SECRET

SECRET

and he is eager to shame them for any half-heartedness in their support of the Palestinians or for their ties with the US. These attitudes account for his militancy, which makes him inaccessible to influence [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] They also account for his willingness to subordinate Libyan national interests to the Arab cause as he defines it.

Qadhafi's Foreign Policies

5. Qadhafi spends money freely in pursuit of his aims abroad. An annual subvention of \$250 million to Egypt purchases considerable influence in Cairo, which he hopes to increase when the two countries merge. In addition, Libya provides over \$100 million to aid an assortment of other clients in the name of Muslim solidarity and the

6. Money is a less important factor in Qadhafi's support of the Palestinians, although he has given at least \$30 million in arms and supplies to the fedayeen--including Patah's Black September Organization--over the past year. He provides training facilities in Libya for perhaps as many as 2,000 guerrillas [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] moral support in the form of encouragement and pressure on other Arab states which might otherwise be inclined to backslide in their sacrifices for the cause.

7. Qadhafi regards terrorism as a legitimate weapon,

SECRET

SECRET

US Interests

8. In the immediate future, Libya is likely to attack any US reconnaissance aircraft which enter the 100-miles-from Tripoli restricted zone which it has proclaimed.



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